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Research and Innovation Month Kicks Off

By SHARON RENEE TAYLOR

WRNMMC Public Affairs staff writer

Research and Innovation Month at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) began May 4 with the fourth annual Aware for All educational program.

Representatives from more than 20 different departments and research organizations joined in the kick-off Aware for All event, designed to help people learn more about participating in clinical research, as well as recognize the extraordinary depth and breadth of cutting-edge research conducted at WRNMMC, according to Supervisory Medical Education Specialist Lisa Thompson.

“Clinical research allows us to make significant advancements in military medicine and improve the health of our beneficiaries locally and throughout the Military Health System,” explained Thompson, who also serves as WRNMMC Department of Research Programs academic research education coordinator.

The occasion also served as a ‘thank you’ and recognition to the volunteers and others who have participated in research at the medical center. Department of Research Programs Chief Army Col. (Dr.) Peter J. Weina explained who he considers to be medical research heroes.

“First, the people who work to assure that our research is the best possible we can do and is in compliance with the rules and regulations—my staff, the people who work in the Department of Research Programs who assist in making us the flagship not only of military medicine, but also the flagship of military medical research,” Weina said. “Second, our partners, the groups who facilitate research in this organization like those who were at the 22 booths we showcased yesterday. And third, but certainly the most important, are the heroes who volunteer to be in our medical research studies.

“These are the heroes of our nation, twice heroes in my view, those who are seen here because of the sacrifices they have made to our nation, those who sacrifice yet again by volunteering to make medicine better for future generations,” Weina said.

The Aware for All program began in 2003, according to Army Col. (Dr.) Brian M. Belson, director for education, training and research at WRNMMC. Designed to allow the public to embrace clinical research, Belson said Aware for All helps stimulate two-way communication through a variety of forums.

“The opportunity for our staff and patients to



PHOTO BY SHARON RENEE TAYLOR

Those who stopped by and participated in the Fourth Annual Aware for All educational program May 4 at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center were able to try out technology used to make significant advancements in military medicine and improve health care.

have face-to-face communication, ask questions, dispel rumors and myths, view presentations and potentially receive free health screenings is invaluable in forming and solidifying the relationship, as well as stimulating interest in clinical research,” he explained.

Belson said 95 percent of volunteers in a clinical trial have stated they would consider participating in another trial, given the opportunity. “Getting them enrolled for that first step is vital to our mission,” he added.

The assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences explained the need for clinical trials.

“They show us what works and what doesn’t in medicine and health care. They are one of the best

ways to learn and hopefully prove what works best in delivering the highest quality health care,” Belson said. “Clinical trials are only a small part of the research that goes into developing a new treatment, but without them, we would not be able to safely and competently evaluate and deliver advancements in health care—eventually saving more lives and improving the quality of those lives.”

Also as part of Research and Innovation Month, a medical poster exhibition is on display until May 13. A two-part research symposium will be held May 18-19 in Memorial Auditorium on the third floor of Bldg. 2. The month-long observance ends May 25 with the 2016 Spring Research Summit for the National Capital Region, which will be held in Memorial Auditorium.

Reminder: Please, Leave the Deer Alone

By NSAB PUBLIC AFFAIRS

As summer approaches, Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) leadership wants to remind everyone to leave the wildlife that resides on the installation alone.

The two animals that frequently raise concern are deer and geese – especially in the springtime when the geese are aggressively defending their nests and when the fawns are born.

Just leave the deer alone – don’t pet or get too close to the animals.

A major concern when employees and patients interact with the deer is disease transmission. Deer carry ticks, which act as a disease vector and could transfer tick-borne illnesses to those who get too close to the deer population on base.

“Lyme disease is endemic to Maryland, and the nymphs that transmit the disease are so small, they are very difficult to detect (the size of a poppy seed),” Paul said. “These ticks bite during the spring and summer months, so we are on the cusp of the ‘biting’ season. Lyme disease is also one of those diseases that has a good clinical outcome if you catch it early and treat it with antibiotics, but it could have complications if you don’t catch it and treat it early.”

There were 14 states that made up 96 percent of the 25,359 confirmed cases of Lyme disease in the United States in 2014, according to the most recent statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



PHOTO BY ANDREW DAMSTEDT

Naval Support Activity Bethesda has issued a reminder of its policy to not feed the deer on the installation.

(CDC). Maryland and Virginia were two of those 14 states, with the CDC reporting that Maryland had a total of 957 confirmed cases, and Virginia had 976 confirmed cases.

Paul said that Lyme disease’s symptoms of headache, fever, chills and fatigue are similar in nature to symptoms of other illnesses. That can make detecting Lyme disease more difficult. If a person doesn’t know they’ve been bitten by a tick, they might not immediately

associate their symptoms with Lyme disease.

“One of the best ways to prevent tick bites is to avoid animals that carry ticks, like deer,” Paul said. “Patients and employees can also use bug repellent when they are enjoying the outdoors (something containing DEET is recommended). But really, just don’t feed the animals, any animals!”

For more information on preventing tick bites, visit www.cdc.gov/lyme.

Bethesda Notebook

Melanoma Awareness Day

The John P. Murtha Cancer Center of Excellence at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center will host Melanoma Awareness Day May 12 from 1 to 4 p.m. in the America Building Lobby. There will be free skin cancer screenings for all TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries on a first-come-first-served basis for walk-ins only. Additional information will be available concerning skin cancer and skin cancer screening. For more information, call Anthony Jones at 301-319-2387.

Cancer Support Group

A support group for people with oral, head and neck cancers meets monthly at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Support for People with Oral and Head and Neck Cancer, Inc. (SPOHNC), a patient-directed self-help organization, was established in 1991 by an oral cancer survivor. The group provides support to oral, head and neck cancer patients, their caregivers and family members. The group next meets May 19 at 3 p.m. in the ENT Clinic in the America Building on the 5th floor. For information, call the ENT Clinic at 301-295-4664.

Morning Prayer

Chaplain (Army Lt. Col.) Joseph Ko leads a morning prayer every weekday morning from 6:30 to 6:50 a.m. (except holidays) in the hospital chapel (Liberty Building 8, first floor). Everyone is invited to attend. The service is also shown on the medical center’s closed circuit “Flag Channel” (Channel 14) in most patient rooms.

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NSAB Set to Join in Bike to Work Day

By **ANDREW DAMSTEDT**
NSAB Public Affairs staff writer

Most days, the National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE) director can be seen entering the building in his bicycle outfit, where he'll stop and greet those at the front desk and coffee shop and anyone else he meets.

That's because Navy Capt. Walter M. Greenhalgh frequently chooses to ride his bicycle to work – and he encourages others to do the same.

"It's a great way to get out and get a little exercise – it's not a long ride, but certainly better than driving or taking the bus," Greenhalgh said. "It's nice to know that your carbon footprint is minimized. I personally think it's a great way to see new sites and new areas."

Greenhalgh is one of about 500 people who frequently ride their bicycles to work onboard Naval Support Activity Bethesda. That translates to about 4 percent of NSAB's commuters, according to NSAB Transportation Manager Ryan Emery.

To encourage more personnel to consider riding a bike to work, NSAB is once again participating in the annual region-wide Bike to Work Day, taking place May 20. Emery expects about 150 to 200 people to sign up for the event, which happens rain or shine.

"This is a good way to do it because others will be on the road at the same time," Emery said. "If people already bicycle to work, it's a good way to recognize them for doing that day in and day out."

NSAB's pit stop will be in front of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center's tower, where Emery said they will be handing out T-shirts and refreshments for registered participants.

To sign up for the free event, go to www.biketoworkmetrodc.org and select NSAB as the pit stop.

Seeing people ride their bicycles to work and the several bike racks around the installation can promote health and wellness on NSAB, Greenhalgh said



PHOTO BY ANDREW DAMSTEDT

National Intrepid Center of Excellence Director Navy Capt. Walter M. Greenhalgh rides his bicycle on Naval Support Activity Bethesda.

One reason, Greenhalgh said he rides his bicycle to work is that he avoids being in traffic, plus it's easier to find a parking space for his bicycle.

"It's quicker to get to work and be in my office than if I were to drive," he said.

He encourages people to ride safely and to not ride in unsafe weather conditions, use bike paths, wear bright clothing, wear a helmet and keep bicycle well-maintained.

He said people don't need fancy or expensive bikes for their commute, but advised people to make sure their bicycle is comfortable and can easily carry their gear.

"It's important to make sure they have a good route planned, that's safe and doesn't put them at risk," he said. "Ideally if they can find partners to ride with, it adds to the enjoyment."

NSAB Safety Manager Jim Ganz echoed those safety concerns and added to be careful around the several ongoing construction projects on the installation.



PHOTO BY ANDREW DAMSTEDT

Greenhalgh parks his bicycle at one of several bike racks on Naval Support Activity Bethesda.

"While employees on the installation should now be used to the closure of Brown Drive and its associated detours and have adjusted their commuting patterns accordingly, we also need to be aware of the fact that, even now, there are many drivers entering this installation who are confronting the situation for the first time," Ganz said.

Throughout the construction, there will be times when there will be work-zones involving single-lane closures, or steel plates across the roadway, and Ganz advised to ride with caution and follow all instructions by the site's traffic directors.

He encourages bicyclists to obey all stop signs and any other traffic signals/directions, and pay extra attention to pedestrians and drivers.

"Lastly, if you are an employee who works on this installation, please set the example by practicing good riding habits, following traffic safety regulations and exercising patience when someone around you does something unexpected," Ganz said.

Walter Reed Bethesda, Kirk Test Emergency Response



PHOTO BY BERNARD S. LITTLE

During a joint training exercise between Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., April 20 mock patient Army Spc. Nicholas D'Amours has his blood drawn.

Exercise Proves 'Mutually Beneficial' For Participants

By **BERNARD S. LITTLE**,
WRNMMC Public Affairs
staff writer and Stacy
Smith, APG News

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) and Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic (KUSAHC) at Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG), Md., recently participated in a successful exercise to move an individual to WRNMMC for care if exposed to a non-traditional agent at APG.

The exercise, conducted April 20, was designed to "evaluate notification, patient transfer, reception, medical management and admission procedures," according to Chris Gillette, WRNMMC command emergency manager.

"The drill was a great opportunity to exercise our Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Kirk for

admission and medical management of personnel [if] exposed to a hazardous agent while performing their assigned duties," Gillette explained. "Although we have worked very closely with Kirk over the past year to refine our policies and procedures, and [we] have conducted several planning meetings and tabletop exercises, this was the first time we actually moved an exercise patient by ambulance from Aberdeen to our hospital," Gillette said.

He explained the MOA was signed Oct. 21, 2014 between Kirk and WRNMMC. The MOA states Kirk will transfer employees exposed to classified agents (chemical and biological) requiring hospital admission and treatment,

See **RESPONSE**

Page 6

Combat Casualty Care Director to Speak at Medical Museum Science Cafe

By **DANIEL DAGLIS**
National Museum of
Health and Medicine

The National Museum of Health and Medicine has hundreds of artifacts on display that take visitors on a journey through the history of military medicine. As visitors walk from gallery to gallery, they can see just how far military medicine has come through innovations that have also contributed to civilian medicine.

On Tuesday, May 24, at 6 p.m., U.S. Air Force Col. Todd Rasmussen, director of the Department of Defense Combat Casualty Care Research Program (CCCRP) headquartered in Frederick, Maryland, will share how the CCCRP optimizes the survival and recovery of U.S. service members in current and future operational scenarios, with a focus on treating bleeding control and traumatic brain injury.

Col. Rasmussen, a decorated vascular surgeon, will review the evolution of U.S. battlefield medicine and how warfighter care has developed over the decades. One concept that combat care specialists on the battlefield adhere to is the concept of the "Golden Hour."

"The 'Golden Hour' exists to give battlefield medical providers a specific



PHOTO BY SGT. KIMBERLY LAMB

Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company and Alpha Company, 1-125 Infantry Regiment, 37th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, practice medical evacuation during training at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center, Miss., Nov. 11, 2011.

target for providing medical care to U.S. warfighters," says Rasmussen. "It is the time period in which medical care in such situations has been determined to be the most beneficial for injured personnel. The concept is based on movement of the injured person to a fixed location or echelon of

care within 60 minutes."

Focus and the ability to function under extreme circumstances are only the basic tools needed by a combat medic. In addition to the use of tourniquets to stop the bleeding of an injured soldier, Rasmussen says, "different and varied uses of plasma



COURTESY PHOTO

A crew member from C Company, 6th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade provides care for a patient.

and other blood products have also been pivotal for the CCCRP in this regard."

The CCCRP collects much of its data

See **NMHM**
Page 6



PHOTO BY MCSN WILLIAM PHILLIPS

Naval Support Activity Bethesda observed the National Day of Prayer at the USO Warrior and Family Center May 5.

NSAB Observes National Day of Prayer

By **MCSN WILLIAM PHILLIPS**
NSAB Public Affairs staff writer

Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) held a prayer breakfast for the 65th annual National Day of Prayer May 5 at the USO Warrior and Family Center.

"[The National Day of Prayer] is significant because regardless of our individual beliefs or our backgrounds, this day recognizes prayer as a common ground, which protects our religious freedoms," said Capt. Marvin L. Jones, NSAB commanding officer.

Prayer can help some people through tough times in their life, as shared by guest speaker Brig. Gen. Scott Dingle, deputy chief of staff, operational plans and policies, United States Army Medical Command.

"As I stand here today, I buried my father about two weeks ago and I lost my mother in 2013," Dingle said. "As I go through a difficult period in my life, one of the things that hits right with today's prayer breakfast [is that] the theme of the National Day of Prayer is 'Wake Up America.'"

Prayer can help bring people from all walks of life together.

"The National Day of Prayer belongs to all Americans; it's a day that transcends differences and brings together citizens from all walks of life and backgrounds, as you can see here today," said Jones.

National Day of Prayer is an annual observance



PHOTO BY MCSN WILLIAM PHILLIPS

Senior Chief Detrick Jones offers a prayer for a healthy life for those who attended the prayer breakfast.

on the first Thursday of May designated by the U.S. Congress, with the president issuing a proclamation each year. The observance dates back 65 years to President Harry S. Truman, who signed the first proclamation. A portion of President Barack Obama's proclamation this year read: "Our country was founded on the idea of religious freedom, and we have long upheld the belief that how we pray and whether we pray are matters reserved for an individual's own conscience. On National Day of Prayer, we rededicate ourselves to extending this freedom to all people."

A breakfast prepared by NSAB culinary specialists was provided before the program, which included songs and prayers by service members and civilians.

The Future of Medicine: WRNMMC Staff Gives High School Students Insight Into Medical Careers

By **BERNARD S. LITTLE**
WRNMMC Public
Affairs staff writer

Jordan Greene, 16, meticulously worked to successfully tie a square knot on a simulated body part at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) as Dr. George McNamee, deputy director of surgical skills in WRNMMC's Simulation Center, offered advice and encouragement.

"This is not easy [and] why surgeons go to 14 years of school. They go four years to earn their bachelor's degree, then go four years of medical school and another four to six years [in their specialty]," McNamee explained to Greene and the high schooler's fellow students participating in Thomas Edison High School of Technology's Academy of Health Professions Medical Science With Clinical Applications program. The program exposes students in various public high schools throughout Montgomery County to medical and science careers through classroom study and work-based internships.

McNamee, who's also assistant professor of surgery in the Norman M. Rich Department of Surgery at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, usually teaches and mentors medical and nursing students, residents and faculty in the proper techniques of surgery and research, leading to improvement in patient care and safety. On May 5 at WRNMMC, his seven students were younger – high school juniors and seniors, most with aspirations of careers in the medical field like Greene.

"I like to help people, and I really like medicine," said Greene, a junior at Paint Branch High School in Burtonsville, Md., who adds he wants to be a cardiac surgeon.

In WRNMMC's Simulation Center, McNamee also demonstrated for the students how surgeons use computers to sharpen their surgery skills. He also showed the students how to administer an intramuscular injection and suture incisions with needle and thread.

"You got it," McNamee said to Greene as the teenager successfully tied the square knot, used to close incisions and wounds. "Keep working hard, Keep working hard," were the doctor's final words to the high school students.

Army Spc. Syverson Brehon, a surgical technician at WRNMMC, also gave the students some insight into an operating room (OR), showing the students how medical professionals "prep" for procedures, sterilizing their hands, carefully donning their scrubs, ensuring they have the proper



PHOTO BY BERNARD S. LITTLE

Dr. George McNamee, deputy director of surgical skills in the Simulation Center at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, teaches Paint Branch High School students how to administer an intramuscular injection.

equipment and correctly handing instruments to surgeons.

WRNMMC perioperative nurse Karina Clerge was also on hand to give the students advice, explaining to them she had stood in their shoes when she was a high school student at Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring, Md. "They were where I've been before," she explained. "When I came into the program I had no idea of what I wanted to do. I knew I wanted to do something in the medical field but I wasn't quite sure [what that was]. Meeting folks through this program really gave me a sense of direction. I was really happy and grateful that I participated in the program."

Clerge, who earned her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from the University of Missouri, is now working to become a family nurse practitioner, which she expects to accomplish in August.

With aspirations of following in Clerge's footsteps and becoming a nurse, Prerna Lall, also a Paint Branch student and participant in the Medical Science Program, said she has enjoyed working in the lab and at WRNMMC as part of the program. "I've enjoyed exposure to all of the different specialties and more experiences like this really help me in determining what I want to do," Lall added.

Registered nurse Kristine Mansky is the medical careers instructor at Thomas Edison H.S. and is a coordinator for its Academy of Health Professions program. She explained in addition to professional recommendations and high academic performance, students accepted into the program must complete a foundation of medicine course, as well as a human

anatomy and physiology course.

The "academically challenging" program that has evolved from one to two years combines science and technology, Mansky explained. "The learning environment includes classroom, computer research lab and clinical laboratory, which certify students as medical assistants after completing the first year. The course's second year includes work-based internships, with

the final rotation at WRNMMC.

"During this rotation, medical science interns rotate through a variety of departments, observing health practitioners and participating in hands-on experiences when appropriate," she added. This year the interns began shadowing clinics April 14, and will continue to do so until June 10.

Mansky has participated with WRNMMC as part of the program, which began in 1985, since 1991.

"There have been 30 to 40 students every year who have been in the program in the 25 years I've worked with it," Mansky said. "I have former students who are veterinarians, a pediatric oncologist, one who worked in the ER in Sir Lanka, clinical psychologists, and a lot of nurses." She added a nurse in the Mother Infant Care Center at WRNMMC, Rebecca Carter, also participated in the program.

Mansky said the students receive Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act certification as well as certification as nursing assistants by the Maryland Board of Nursing, and basic life support for healthcare providers certification.

Most rewarding about the program, Mansky said, is witnessing the participants evolve into not only excellent students, but practitioners. She said she also enjoys hearing from her former students and how they have achieved their dreams of higher education and working in the medical field.

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RESPONSE

From
Page 3

to WRNMMC, which will be notified before the transfer.

“Patients will be transferred after decontamination and initial treatment, via ambulance with a physician, medical team and medical management/treatment protocols,” Gillette stated. He added WRNMMC will have a hospital decontamination team standing by for arrival of the patient, who will be placed in an isolation room.

“Walter Reed will handle and evaluate our patients like any other patient they would get in the emergency department,” said Dr. Mark Lovell, KUSAHC chief of preventive medicine and occupational health.

The exercise began at Kirk where

mock patient Army Spc. Nicholas D’Amours was evaluated and treated as a result of a simulated chemical exposure during a laboratory accident. KUSAHC physician assistant Lauren Abbott notified the WRNMMC Emergency Department of the pending patient transport.

KUSAHC Chief of Surety Medicine Dr. Carrie Dorsey acted as medical response team (MRT) leader and had her team administer reactive skin decontamination lotion to D’Amours to help absorb the contamination during the exercise scenario. The team also tested D’Amours’ blood for dangerous enzymes indicating chemical exposure, and administered enzyme blockers.

After D’Amours was tested and evaluated, the MRT made a second call to WRNMMC emergency department to provide them more detailed patient information. Kirk’s Directorate of Emergency Medical

Services paramedics then transported the Soldier to WRNMMC where its Emergency Department personnel received him.

“Everybody was pleased with the results,” said KUSAHC Surety Specialist Barry Hersey. “It was agreed the exercise went well with excellent communications, patient treatment and management, reception and admission procedures and notification. The exercise provided a training opportunity that was mutually beneficial for all participants.”

Mike Slayman, MRT supervisor, added, “The exercise was a good opportunity because we need to make sure we have our resources in place that can handle these long transports. What we’re trying to do right now is make our capabilities more interoperable with Walter Reed Bethesda.”

“The major takeaway [from the exercise] was that all of our ongoing

planning and preparation was clearly evident throughout...” Gillette added. “The primary objective in response to any incident or exercise is life safety. Staff clearly understood their role, discussed pre-hospital treatment and decontamination procedures and utilized checklists outlining all of the necessary information needed prior to patient transfer,” he continued.

“We really did not have any challenges [during the exercise],” Gillette stated. “Communications always seems to be an ongoing challenge during any incident or exercise; however, in this case, [it] was extremely effective. The medical team from Kirk provided a detailed patient report prior to transfer and ensured we had received medical management protocols prior to patient arrival. Our staff members were well prepared to receive the patient.”

NMHM

From
Page 4

on-site using a Joint Combat Casualty Research Team. It has been found that the majority of wartime deaths occur in the out-of-hospital setting.

“The point of injury component of care is termed ‘tactical combat casualty care.’ During the past decade, this phase has been transformed to introduce and integrate elements of medical care with military tactics. Combat units are now trained

in tactical combat casualty care, a strategy that has reduced preventable death.

Rasmussen will also discuss products and innovations that have helped treat and prevent traumatic brain injuries, which are a major concern on the battlefield and can affect the soldier over a long-term basis. Many of these innovations, as well as examples of the effects of TBI can be viewed in the NMHM collections.

The work of the CCCR is vital to the proper treatment of the injured soldier. The Science Café is a unique opportunity to learn about how

these efforts are saving lives and protecting the men and women who serve this country in the U.S. military.

NMHM’s Medical Museum Science Cafes are a regular series of informal talks that connect the mission of the Department of Defense museum with the public. NMHM was founded as the Army Medical Museum in 1862 and moved to its current location in Silver Spring, Md. in 2012. NMHM is an element of the Defense Health Agency. For more information on upcoming events, please call 301-319-3303 or visit www.medicalmuseum.mil.

Dr. J.K. Yeager, retired navy veteran, is pleased to announce the association of his daughter, Dr. Caroline Yeager.



Dr. Caroline Yeager attended Princeton University for undergraduate studies and graduated with highest honors. She completed Duke Medical School, where she was a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha medical honor society, and she completed her residency training at Emory University.

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